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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/FO, NEA/ARP/BMASILKO

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MASS](#) [MCAP](#) [PINS](#) [AE](#)

SUBJECT: UAEG WANTS TO DISCUSS PATRIOTS

Ref: STATE 92763

Classified by Charge d'Affaires Martin Quinn, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: On September 1, Post delivered reftel demarche on the U.S. decision to offer Patriot deployment to the UAE. A basic presentation to the Abu Dhabi Crown Prince's office soon brought the issue to the attention of the Air Force leadership, with whom we discussed the deployment in greater detail the following morning. In both meetings it was clear that the UAEG welcomes the decision yet seeks further clarity on the specifics of the proposal before the UAEG could give a firm go ahead. UAE interlocutors viewed deployment by October 31 as overly optimistic. The UAE seeks more detail on costs and coordination before a formal decision can be made. End summary.

Crown Prince's Court the First Night of Ramadan

¶2. (C) Acting DCM, Defense Attache, and U.S. Liaison Office Chief made a coordinated approach to Mohamed al-Mazrouie, Under Secretary of the Crown Prince's Court, late in the evening on September 1 to seek the Crown Prince's views on reftel decision to deploy PATRIOT assets to the UAE. Al-Mazrouie inquired about timelines, cost sharing, basic technical parameters of the offer, and potential "principles" of coordination (protocols of U.S.-UAE operational coordination), agreeing that each of these issues needed to be discussed in somewhat more detail before the UAEG could fully embrace the offer. His initial sense was that full deployment by October 31 was rather optimistic.

¶3. (C) Embassy officers emphasized that we sought the UAEG's intent regarding the deployment and welcomed further discussion to clarify parameters. We asked that al-Mazrouie take the issue to Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces Mohammed bin Zayed (MbZ, who was entertaining Ramadan guests nearby) for permission to initiate the needed discussions. Phone calls from UAE Air Force officials -- within an hour -- confirmed that the UAE wanted to pursue the dialogue quickly but sought greater clarity before MbZ would give a final green light.

Air Force Commander the Following Morning

¶4. (C) The same Embassy officers, with additional U.S. Liaison Office experts, met with Air Force Commander Mohammed al-Qamzi on the morning of September 2 at the latter's request. Al-Qamzi focused on the need for clarity, in writing, of just what the proposed deployment might entail. He wanted to know how much it would cost the UAE, both for infrastructure and for maintenance of U.S. troops to man the systems. He was interested in how many batteries / launchers were involved (we suggested one initial battery with another potentially added some months later, each battery having multiple launchers with certain restrictions as to how "remote" they could be from the main radar site). He asked if the Patriots would be linked to other U.S. systems or stand alone, whether UAE troops might be able to train on the system (in anticipation of the UAE's eventual purchase of Patriots), how many U.S. troops would be involved (we estimated 300), what infrastructure requirements were involved, and what sites would be our priority to protect. We noted that all of these issues needed to be worked out by mutual discussion, and that we sought to initiate that discussion quickly.

A meeting was set for September 4 in anticipation of the arrival of ARCENT subject matter experts to help turn U.S. planning assumptions into more realistic proposals.

15. (C) Al-Qamzi closed by reiterating his need for a clear (written) proposal that he could staff up the chain of command. It is not as simple as "we want it, bring it," he emphasized, asking that materiel not be shipped to the UAE until the basic parameters were established and approved by MbZ. Al-Qamzi also noted the legal issues that might be involved and was adamant about pursuing the deployment methodically -- "the right way."

16. (C) Comment: In both meetings it was clear that an October timeline may be too optimistic/aggressive, although both interlocutors sought to refine the details of the offer with some urgency. Cost was discussed, but did not become an issue, with al-Mazrouie; on the other hand, al-Qamzi was very concerned about cost as he works with a finite budget. End comment.
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